



COMMISSIONER PROFILE

COMMISSIONER JIM PETERS

Commissioner Jim Peters was born and raised in Yelm. He attended Centralia Community College and earned an associate degree in Forestry Technology.

Squaxin Island Tribal Member

Jim is a member of the Squaxin Island Tribe. He has served on the Tribal Council for five years and served on the Inter-Tribal Court Board.

After graduating from Centralia Community College he became the Natural Resources Director at the Squaxin Island Tribe in the Natural Resources Department. He left the Director position to work for the State of Washington, but then returned.

The Natural Resources Department annually organizes the First Salmon Ceremony. Jim is the traditional 'salmon-on-the-stick' cooker!



Dept. of Natural Resources and US Forest Service

From 1991 through 1996 Jim worked as the Tribal Relations Coordinator for the Washington Department of Natural Resources. Prior to that assignment he worked in Fire Management for the US Forest Service.

Conservation Commission

Jim has been a member of the Commission since 1998. He is currently serving as the Vice Chair.

Committees and Appointments

Jim has served on the NW Indian Fisheries Commission and was the Chairman of the NW Indian Fisheries Environmental Policy Committee.

He also served in the US Canada Stakeholder Process, as the South Puget Sound representative from 1996 through 1998.

Family

Jim and his family reside on 18 treed acres in the Olympia area around Steam Boat Island for over



twenty years. They have a barn filled with two sheep, two pigmy goats, six cats, a dog, and bunnies.

Jim has been married to his wonderful wife Lisa for over 15 years. They have three children—all girls—Chazmin (21), Haley (10), and Addie (5).

Spare Time

Jim helps coach girls basketball through the YMCA and is active in educating schools in Native American history when requested and organizes field trips for the kids.

Jim enjoys hanging out with his family and spending time camping, boating and barbecuing. He is also an avid Sea Hawks fan, attending games as often as he can! Oh, and we certainly cannot forget...golfing!

The Peters: Haley, Jim & Addie

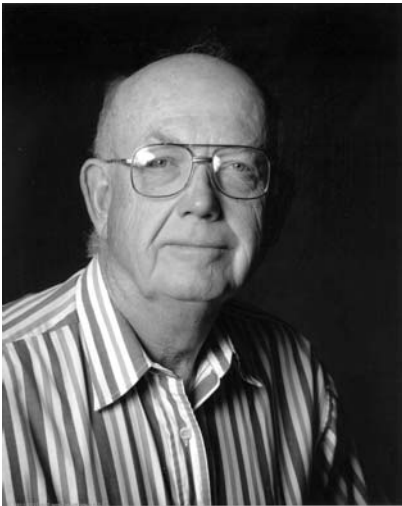
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*Protect, Conserve and Enhance the
Natural Resources of the State*



FROM THE CHAIR...TRACY ERIKSEN



First, I want to express my appreciation to Governor Locke for his appointment of Lynn Bahrych to the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC). Lynn has had the opportunity to participate in one WSCC meeting and has also served as a member of one of the Dairy Appeal

Panels. She has demonstrated that she has an interest and concern about the viability of agriculture in this regulatory and economic environment. Welcome Lynn! We look forward to your participation.

Tis' the political season. The State Legislature is on the last half of the allotted time for this session. There are many bills that have merit and money tied to them. The WSCC has one of these issues—Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The WSCC has put in a supplemental request for \$2.5 million dollars.

The WSCC realized late winter that enrollments were running ahead of the money funded by the Legislature for the current biennium and drafted a letter to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) asking them to suspend enrolling new contracts. CREP is an

important program in twenty five states. By the Governor's request the state of Washington chose to use CREP funding as part of the state's salmon recovery program. The state endorsed CREP in 1999 and put a cap for the program at twenty million state dollars. This money gave the state access to approximately two hundred million federal dollars administered through FSA. We are approximately half way through the program. The suspension has given us the opportunity to gather data, study the costs of the program and to encourage recommendations on how to improve this already successful program for landowners in eligible areas across the state.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Tracy Eriksen".

WSCC Chair

NEW COMMISSION MEMBERS

Lynn Bahrych

Governor Lock appointed Lynn Bahrych on January 9, 2004, and the term ending June 6, 2007.

Commissioner Bahrych is a self-employed attorney and resides in San Juan County on Shaw Island.

Lynn is a member of the Washington Environmental Council, Friends of the San Juans, and the Washington Conservation Voters to name a few. Lynn has given her legal expertise over the years to protect the islands and working collaboratively with those involved to ensure that environmental laws are properly enforced.

Lynn began her work in the field as a faculty member in Legal Writing at UW Law School. She is the author of Legal Writing in a Nutshell—a very widely used guide for legal writing in law schools around the nation.

Paul Stoker

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts elected Paul Stoker of the Othello Conservation District as President on December 2, 2004.

Commissioner Stoker has thirty four years experience in Row Crop Farming in Othello. He has served eight years as the local organizer on water issues in Adams, Grant and Franklin counties. He also served two years as the Ground Water Management Area Executive Director and is currently a District Supervisor at the Othello Conservation District. He has been with the Othello Conservation District over eight years.



Commissioners Lynn Bahrych and Paul Stoker

IRRIGATION EFFICIENCIES GRANTS PROGRAM

By Jon Culp

Prior to the introduction of irrigation in the State of Washington, bunch grass with a cyclical rotation of sage and bitter brush, was the dominating vegetation covering much of what we know as farm ground today. Back then, yellows and browns overtook mother nature's easel much of the year, except for that couple of weeks when winter's moisture was being drawn from the ground by fresh new roots.

Today, the landscape—at least on any piece of ground flat enough to hold a seed and close enough to a source of water to be nourished by it—has a considerably different look and feel to it. Man-made canals, pipelines and ditches side slope water throughout the countryside to distribute life among rows and furrows.

However, the physical landscape is not the only transformation that has taken place. The view of water as a public resource has created some interesting anomalies within our society today, that could never have been envisioned in the day when summer wildfire was greatest of human concern in the steppe.

Uttering the phrase “water rights” in farming community coffee shops in any western state will result in veins appearing on necks, sweat on brows, fists clenched so tight that rippling tremors will erupt on thick black coffee drunk from stout mugs that occasionally gavel the breakfast counter.

The discussion of water rights and their regulation has been the ever controversial topic of many conversations. Some have been heated, walked out on and some, on the very rare occasion, will realize middle ground where folks can agree—or at least agree to disagree.

The birthplace of the Irrigation Efficiencies Grants Program probably came from one of those latter discussions. The goal being a place where farmers can continue to farm their crops, convey the necessary

water on their farm, meet their crops water needs and do it using less water than ever before.

Why would creating a means for farmers to use less water be a good thing to do? Why not allow them to continue using the old system that their grandfather or father used?

In sixteen basins the State has over appropriated the water essentially drying up the stream through irrigation diversions. This allocation or over-allocation came at a time in history when conservation was a relatively new concept and the human effect on fish, wildlife, and natural resources in general were of little concern.

As time has gone on, with more and more humans to feed, the idea of sustainability began to surface. How do we perpetuate agriculture as an essential part of human existence, while also conserving and enhancing our natural resources? Water, being of the utmost importance, how do we recreate instream flows in streams where the state has given the right to all of the water to the people for their use? How do we not noose the necks of the very farmers that feed our children while leaving flow in streams where it is needed? The answer is irrigation efficiency.

Through the Irrigation Efficiencies Grants Program, the State has offered the irrigation farming public, a program that will allow them to meet their crop's water needs.

Essentially, the program tightens-up the conveyance aspects of the irrigators system. When water is delivered down an open, unlined ditch, it is typically likely to suffer from conveyance losses through the soil. By tight-lining this ditch, either by pipe, or by lining, those conveyance losses are nullified. This “saved” water may then be left in stream for flows, while the farmer is still delivered the same quantity of water at the outlet end of the delivery system. A winning situation on both ends!



In another case, a farmer who is using some form of surface irrigation—flood, rill, etc.—conveyance water is lost in the same manner. Water is used to convey the consumptive use water (portion used by the plant) to each plant for use. The program, by offering cost share to install more efficient irrigation systems will effectively reduce the amount of water lost in the conveyance aspects of the system. Even hand lines and wheel lines, by design are less efficient in their ability to get water to the crop when the crop needs it.

Washington State University and the Natural Resource Conservation Service publish irrigation system potential efficiency ratings that show ratings from flood irrigation at 30 percent up to drip at 90 plus percent. The efficiency applied to the farm allows the farmer to grow the crop while diverting less water, thereby enhancing the instream flow.

To date, nine irrigation farmers or water purveyors have utilized this program through a cost share agreement to install a more efficient system and leave some of their historically diverted water in the stream. These irrigators have contributed 24+ cubic feet per second and 4,327.4 acre feet of water to instream flows in eight different tributaries and rivers.

This program has proven that you can have your irrigated agriculture and your instream flows too!

For more information contact:
*Jon Culp, Irrigation Efficiencies Grants
Program Manager at 509.826.7212 or
email: jonculp@ncidata.com*

GOVERNOR'S TOUR—ELLENSBURG



Anna Lael, Governor Locke and Valoria Loveland (Director of Agriculture)

On December 8, 2003, Governor Gary Locke viewed a water conservation and fish access project in the Upper Yakima River Basin and met with agricultural leaders during a visit to the Ellensburg area. Valoria Loveland, Director of the State Department of Agriculture, and representatives of state and local governments and the Yakama Nation also attended the tour.

Governor Locke was in town to view an innovative project at John Eaton's farm as well as discuss water-use and watershed planning issues affecting the region and state.

"John Eaton's strong commitment to finding ways to conserve and use water wisely, improve the environment and help fish typifies what we are seeing in the Yakima River Basin," Locke said. "The many changes he has put into place demonstrate how successful we can be when we work toward the common goal of helping people, farms and fish."

During the tour, Locke viewed the many benefits being created by Eaton's project. He has increased the efficiency of water usage on his farm, reduced sediment-laden water run-off, increased local stream flow, and opened miles of upstream habitat for fish.

The governor also hosted a meeting at the Ellensburg Fire Station with local and regional leaders to discuss water issues and thank the group for their efforts to successfully protect and manage this vital natural resource.

"Local citizens and governments are actively involved in watershed planning in the Yakima Basin," Locke said. "They continue to make tremendous progress toward providing sufficient water for competing needs such as agriculture, growing communities and healthy watersheds. I believe that the success we see in the basin illustrates exactly the type of effort we need in other areas of Washington."

The governor highlighted the significant work that has been done to clean up water in the upper and lower Yakima River basins. The state Department of Ecology and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation have worked together to make several significant water-right and land purchases to permanently improve water flows and provide significant habitat for fish.

"We welcome Gov. Locke to the Ellensburg area to see some of the good work our local farmers and ranchers are doing," said Rep. Bill Hinkle of Cle Elum. "We are making great strides in enhancing our watershed habitat and at the same time keeping agriculture viable in the Yakima Basin."

The governor's visit to Ellensburg is the third in a series of statewide visits to view and discuss water-related issues with local communities. Locke toured Walla Walla in November and visited the Bellingham area last week.

Governor Gary Locke and John Eaton

SUSTAINABILITY

A few suggestions on reducing paper use in correspondence procedures:

Sending Messages/Mail/Faxes

- Eliminate cover sheets for faxes
- Use a rubber stamp especially made for fax transmittals
- Use Fax Post It Notes.
- Send memos via email.
- Eliminate pictures and graphics from email so that less ink is used when printing.

Recycle Paper

- Reuse single-sided paper for notepads or for draft copies.
- Reuse envelopes or use rerouting envelopes for internal information.

Receiving Messages/Mail

- Avoid printing unnecessary emails.
- Save important emails on a disk.
- Notify vendors and remove duplicates on mailing lists.
- Cancel unnecessary subscriptions.
- Subscribe to online versions of publications when available.

Documents/Forms

- Make reports and data available online.
- Revise documents to reduce length. Use smaller fonts, smaller margins, and single spacing.
- Create forms in an electronic format.
- Minimize the use of colored papers.
- ALWAYS use the duplex feature when copying or printing documents.

WSSC Sustainability Plan:

http://filecab.scc.wa.gov/Commission/Plans/Conservation_Commission_Sustainability_Plan_03.doc



C-GARs COMING SOON TO CDs

By Cheryl Witt

No, not the bad-for-your-health Havana or Cuban varieties, but the CGR (Commission Grant Review) brand that has been specially designed to enhance districts' over-all fitness for grant accounting. CGRs reinforce sound grant accounting methods and procedures, and identify opportunities for making healthy improvements.

In November 2003, Commission grants staff conducted the very-first-ever CGR with the Thurston Conservation District. The test run served the dual purpose of training for the three grants staff to ensure continuity in the way the reviews are performed across the state, and as the biennial review for Thurston CD.

Commission Grant Reviews will be conducted every two years (opposite the year the District Operations Review

is done by the Field Operations Manager). Grant reviews will involve three sections: 1) A series of internal control questions related to the district's management of Commission grants, 2) A testing of transactions involving the district's recent Commission grants, and 3) At least two site visits to view projects implemented with respective Commission grant funds. (See http://filecab.scc.wa.gov/index.html?DIR=Forms/Commission_Grant_Review to access the CGR form and procedures.)

Grants staff will begin setting up appointments and performing CGRs with conservation districts in February 2004. The goal is to perform all 48 conservation district grant reviews by the end of the biennium, June 2005.

CONGRATULATIONS NORM MCCLURE!

On December 16, 2003, over 1,100 ranchers and other conservation leaders from all over the nation gathered in Nashville, Tennessee to attend the Second National Grazing Lands Conference.

Gus Hughbanks of NRCS recognized one of Washington State's leaders in conservation – Norm McClure of Nespelem. Norm is a long time board member of the Okanogan Conservation District.

Norm has spent the majority of his life in dedication and support of maintaining grazing lands in the State. He has played a big role in the Coordinated Resource Management Committees and the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. Norm is truly a leader in conservation efforts for the State.

DAIRY APPEALS & SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS

By Debbie Becker

The law that mandates manure management for the State's dairy producers also provides the ability for producers to appeal to the Conservation Commission for a variety of reasons.

The Commission published policies and procedures on conducting these hearings in June of 2002. The first of these producer-requested hearings were conducted in December 2003.

So far, we have held four sessions, hearing 41 dairy appeals. There are still six that are pending to be heard.

Thanks to the dedication and efforts of several Commission members, these hearings have been professional, timely and extremely educational. Without the dedication of Jackie Reid, Jim Peters, Lee Faulconer, Dave Peeler, Lynn Brown, Tracy Eriksen, Lynn Bahrych, and Ed

Adams, we would have been unable to meet our mandate. Many an hour was spent listening and determining the merits of each individual case. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

One of the key messages to take home from this process is the continued important role that the district technicians have played in assisting the State's dairy producers.



Hearing after hearing, we saw the reliance that the dairy producers have upon the district technicians and the district expertise in helping the producers navigate through the requirements, deadlines and funding opportunities.

This relationship does not end with the passage of the December 31, 2003 deadline, this relationship is as important today as it was on April 1, 1998, when the original law was signed by Governor Locke. Congratulations to the district technicians and district supervisors for your continued dedication and commitment to education, assistance and implementation.

Many successful stories can be told as a result of the relationship of the district technicians and the State's dairy producers regarding the impact on the State's natural resources, kudos to both of you and wishes for your continued success!



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COMMISSION CALENDAR

MARCH

- 1 Appointed Supervisor Recommendations Due to WSCC
- 10 State Committee Meeting—Spokane
- 11 Legislature Closes
- 15-17 NACD Legislative Conference—Washington DC
- 17 WSCC Commission Tour & Interactive Dinner arranged by Pierce CD
- 18 WSCC Commission Meeting Puyallup (Pierce CD Host)

APRIL

- 2 PSAT Meeting
- 29 SRFB Meeting

MAY

- 1 WSCC Strategic Plan Due
CD Annual Plans Due
CD Basic Funding Applications and
CD Internal Audit Report Due
- 18 WSCC Commission Tour & Interactive Dinner arranged by Benton CD
- 19 WSCC Commission Planning Work Session, Red Lion Hotel, Pasco
- 20 WSCC Commission Meeting Red Lion Hotel, Pasco

JUNE

- 11 PSAT Meeting
- 14-16 WADE Training Conference
- 24-25 SRFB Meeting

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

The next Conservation Commission Meeting will be held on March 18 at the Pierce Conservation District office located in the Puyallup Executive Park, 1011 E. Main, Ste. 106, Puyallup.

If you would like more information regarding the Conservation Commission Meeting contact the Commission at 360.407.6200.

The Conservation Conversation newsletters are available online at:

<http://filecab.scc.wa.gov/index.html?DIR=Commission/Newsletters>